



Public Health Committee Public Hearing, March 7, 2022

Testimony of AARP Connecticut in Support of **HB 5046, *An Act Adopting the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact and Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact***

Good morning, Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Public Health Committee:

AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization that advocates for the issues that matter most to individuals age 50 and older. On behalf of our nearly 600,000 members in Connecticut, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for HB 5046, *An Act Adopting the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact and Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact*.

In recent years, interstate licensure compacts have made it easier for nurses, physicians, physical therapists, and other healthcare workers to relocate to other states, provide emergency assistance in times of need, and practice telehealth across state lines. These compacts benefit healthcare professionals as well as their patients. Demand for telehealth services has skyrocketed in the past two years due to COVID-19, and demand for all healthcare services is projected to increase in the coming years as our state and national continue to age at an unprecedented rate. Connecticut needs to take action to ensure that our healthcare workforce is adequate to meet growing needs and changing expectations for how services are provided.

Joining the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact will give Connecticut residents better access to specialized care, which could prove especially beneficial for older adults. Older adults who receive care from a geriatrician, for example, can experience better health outcomes,¹ yet there are only about 7,000 practicing geriatricians in the United States – significantly fewer than the 33,200 necessary to meet projected needs.² Joining the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact would not fully address these types of shortages, but it would make it easier for people to connect with specialized care from out-of-state providers. It would also make it easier for Connecticut's sizeable "snowbird" population to maintain relationships with their Connecticut-based healthcare providers through telehealth, even if they reside elsewhere for part of the year.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments in support of HB 5046.

Meari Avery
Volunteer
AARP Connecticut
mearibc@att.net

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK98020/>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/03/health/geriatricians-shortage.html>